

# Sleeping Safely



About one in five sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) deaths occur while an infant is being cared for by someone other than their parent. Many of

these deaths occur when infants, who are used to sleeping on their backs at home, are placed on their tummies to sleep by another caregiver.

## Safe Sleep Practices

**Always place infants (0-12 months) on their backs to sleep.**

- Develop an up-to-date safe sleep policy. Keep staff current on safe sleep policy and practices.
- Require a physician's note for non-back sleepers explaining why they cannot sleep on their backs.
- Use an approved crib with a firm tight-fitting mattress, railings that are no more than 2 3/8 inches apart. Do not allow infants to sleep in care seats or other equipment.
- Use a fitted sheet that is tight around the mattress.
- Keep the crib free of all soft pillows, toys, bumper pads, quilts and extra bedding.
- If a light blanket is used, place the child's feet at the end of the crib and tuck the blanket in along the sides and end of the mattress. The blanket should not come up higher than the infant's chest.
- Never cover a baby's face.
- Keep room temperature comfortable between 72 and 78 degrees. NOT hot.
- Visually check on sleeping babies often.
- Never put a baby to sleep on a waterbed, sofa, recliner, futon, beanbag, pillow or adult bed.
- Never have a baby share a bed with others, children or adults.
- Never prop a baby on their side or put to bed with a bottle to sleep.
- Do not smoke in any space a baby spends time, including the car.

**\*When infants can easily turn from back to stomach, they should be put down to**

**sleep on their backs and then allowed to take the position they prefer.**

## Tummy Time is Playtime

- When infants are awake, place them on their tummies to play. Have as much tummy time as possible. This will help babies strengthen their muscles and develop normally. Never leave a baby alone.
- Use of swings, bouncy chairs, car seats, and other equipment should be extremely limited.

## SIDS Facts

- The leading cause of death for infants between 1 month and 12 months old.
- Most common among infants that are 2-4 months old.
- More common during the winter months.
- Babies exposed to second-hand smoke have an increased risk for SIDS.
- Babies changed from back-sleeping to stomach sleeping are 6-9 times more likely to die from SIDS.
- SIDS is **not** caused by immunizations, vomiting or choking.

## Talking Points for Parents

- Make sure parents know of your Safe Sleep Policy and reasons why.
- Provide handouts for parents to share with others who care for their babies.
- Be prepared to enforce this policy.

**YOU will be saving lives!**

## Resources:

**IN Perinatal Network:** 800-433-0746 or

[www.indianaperinatal.org](http://www.indianaperinatal.org)

**First Candle SIDS Alliance:** 800-221-7437 or

<http://www.firstcandle.org/>

**Back to Sleep Campaign:** 800-505-CRIB

Caring for our Children 2002: <http://nrc.uchsc.edu>